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ABSTRACT

Evaluation of educational administrators is an outgrowth of the increasing complexity of school operations and the multiplying responsibilities of the administrators. Recent literature recommends evaluation procedures designed to measure an administrator's performance in executing specific tasks and his approximation to specific goals. Several documents cited in this review offer criticisms of existing instruments and procedures and proffer suggestions for the implementation of new evaluation programs. Other documents deal specifically with evaluation as an aspect of accountability or as a basis for salary considerations. Nine of the documents reviewed are available from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service. (Author)

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April 1973 Number 15

Administrator Evaluation

Terry Barraclough

> One of the most important tools in an administrative development program is the performance-evaluation procedure. Performance evaluation provides the information required to make decisions concerning the promotion, transfer, and training of administrative personnel. It also indicates how effectively an administrator is functioning in his job and whether or not he should continue in that job. And, of course, it provides the information required for contract renewal.
>
> *Battelle Memorial Institute (1968)*

Formal evaluation of administrative personnel is a relatively recent development in the history of education and is a direct result of increasing complexity in the operation of schools. The philosophies and procedures of such evaluations are equally recent and, it can be argued, underdeveloped.

During the last several decades, educational administrators have accumulated increasing responsibility. Accompanying the additional responsibility are the rising expectations school boards, community members, fellow administrators, teachers, and students hold for an administrator. Evaluation systems have generally been designed to measure an administrator's ability to live up to those expectations, not his ability to perform his duties.

In the past, evaluation instruments have been developed to measure an administrator against subjective standards. More germane to educational goals and more humane to an administrator are recent evaluation procedures designed to

measure the administrator's performance in executing specific tasks and his approximation to specific goals.

The literature in this review examines administrator evaluation in light of the necessity for better philosophies and instruments. Articles on principal evaluation are included as applicable to all administrator evaluation programs. Several authors deal specifically with the problems of existing evaluation philosophies and procedures. Others treat evaluation as an aspect of accountability and of salary consideration. Some documents detail specific programs and instruments and offer suggestions for the implementation of evaluation programs.

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PHILOSOPHIES

DeVaughn (1971a) states briefly the purposes, scope, and procedures of administrator evaluation within the context of immediate and future educational goals. He asserts that implementation of an evaluation program requires an assessment, by his immediate superior, of the quality of an administrator's educational and administrative leadership. A review procedure at the next higher level of management and a built-in appeal procedure are also necessary in an evaluation program. Appendixes to the manual present administrator evaluation instruments designed to measure professional growth and service in meeting the goals outlined.

In the opinion of Redfern (1972), principal evaluation based on performance objectives is more meaningful than evaluation based on predetermined performance standards with unilateral ratings by the principal's superiors. He discusses various reasons for implementing a principal evaluation program and describes how such a program can be accomplished.

Performance evaluation requires the establishment of appropriate work goals, the development of a clear-cut program of action, and the collection of leadership productivity evidence. There should be frequent contacts between administrator and evaluator, a performance self-assessment by the administrator, an administrator performance assessment by the evaluator, an evaluation conference, and some appropriate followup action.

Demeke ([1971]) offers specific suggestions in developing criteria for administrative performance, instruments for use in data collection and evaluation, and procedures for implementing a program of self-evaluation preliminary to reorientation and retraining. He lists seven areas in which the administrator must demonstrate his competence:

- director of the educational program
- coordinator of guidance and special education services
- member of district and school staff
- link between community and school
- administrator of personnel
- member of the profession
- director of support management

Demeke reviews the administrator's responsibilities in each area and offers guidelines for evaluation within the area.

Citing the need for principal evaluation programs to be more reliable and valid, Rosenberg (1971) argues that evaluation is of importance to the district, to the school, and to the principal himself:

> Only with intelligent evaluation can education become clearly defined, achievement oriented, and provided with a rational basis for policies and decisions and actions which lead to greater and greater improvements.

Evaluation should provide the school district with a comprehensive, valid, and reliable appraisal of the effectiveness of all the principals in the district. Improved inservice training and retraining programs, greater understanding and appreciation of the principal's role in the learning-teaching situation, and improved evaluation procedures should result from an effective evaluation program. The district and the school should be able to ascertain the principal's growth and development and to use that knowledge for advancement considerations.

The principal himself should be given dependable feedback, understanding of his own strengths and weaknesses, and insight into the role expectations of his superiors, teachers, and students. Hopefully, the outcome of such a program would be greater effectiveness and competence.

In a monograph dealing with the appraisal and improvement of school administrative personnel performance, Castetter and Heisler (1971) define performance appraisal and indicate its importance in school administration. They describe the functions of an appraisal system and offer suggestions for improving the effectiveness of such systems.

Castetter and Heisler integrate new concepts of performance appraisal from various streams of administrative thought with well-established knowledge about administrative processes such as planning, organizing, leading, and controlling. They link observations from the behavioral sciences and from industrial management to observations in educational administration. Such integration develops utilitarian propositions expected to benefit the practitioner of evaluation procedures.

Evaluation as a function of the board of education and the superintendent is one facet of a research program proposed by the Battelle Memorial Institute (1968) to increase the effectiveness of educational management. The proposal argues the necessity of evaluation both to the school and to the individual administrator:

> Within an administrative development program, evaluation is a two-way operation: It not only enables the top administrator to get a better understanding of how effectively an administrative subordinate is performing but it also facilitates the subordinate's work by providing him with information concerning his supervisor's expectations, the important responsibilities of his job, and the alternatives open to him in performing his job.

PROBLEMS

In a paper presented at the American Association of School Administrators annual convention, Campbell (1971) discusses some of the problems in administrator evaluation. Major difficulties in devising evaluation programs stem from differing perceptions of the administrator's role, confusion about the meaning of leadership, and situational constraints versus the expectation that an administrator can change the status quo. He argues that schools are conservative and that much of an administrator's time is spent in simply maintaining the organization.

For these reasons, evaluation is complex and difficult.

Campbell believes a set of criteria for functions defined in behavioral terms is necessary for an evaluation of administrative performance. These criteria should be utilized at the time a potential administrator applies to graduate school and again when he applies for an administrative position. He proposes establishment of a national commission for the evaluation of administrative performance in education, involving school board members, superintendents, and professors of educational administration in the nomination of commission members.

DeVaughn (1971b) presents an overview of the promises and problems of teacher and administrator job performance evaluation. He considers lack of attention to the evaluation process, faulty instruments, poorly defined performance criteria, and lack of evaluatee involvement to be the major faults in evaluation programs:

> Most appraisal procedures and instruments have been inadequate and highly subjective and have been administered under an assumption that the superior somehow possessed the required competence to make the correct judgment, usually without involvement of the evaluatee in the process through self-appraisal, when the evaluatee perhaps best knows his strengths and weaknesses and could adequately state his professional need for help if invited to do so in an open, relatively threat-free climate.

In devising evaluation programs, DeVaughn stresses, the civil rights of school district employees must be considered. Decisions in recent court litigations have established that school employees should be guaranteed the usual constitutional rights and that reemployment decisions should be in accord with the principles of academic freedom and due process.

Greene (1972) identifies two major problems in administrator evaluation instruments. First, such instruments rely on the evaluation of personality factors, assuming that these variables, which do not involve production absolutes, can be reduced to a single figure on a rating form. Appraisal, he emphasizes, must be directly tied to performance. Second, such instruments are insensitive to human needs.

Schools can design an appraisal system not prone to these problems. Such a system must include a philosophy explaining why the system is being developed. It must also include performance standards understood by each employee and an instrument to evaluate administrative performance.

More specifically, Greene outlines seven aspects of an effective appraisal system:

- clearly defined program objectives
- provisions for the involvement of appraisee and appraiser in program development and revision
- clearly delineated procedures and explanations
- schedules
- provisions for follow-up and assistance to the appraisee
- orientation and inservice training for those who will implement and operate the program
- an instrument which reflects the objectives of the appraisal plan

ACCOUNTABILITY

The schools, bombarded by external and internal forces, have become enmeshed in an accountability syndrome (Nicholson 1972). The school principal is in the middle of the controversy and is more frequently being asked to become accountable for his administrative performance. To cope with the situation, the principal must take the

> Constant feedback is essential to the personal and professional emotional health of the evaluatee and the evaluator, for neither can be comfortable without timely assessment of "how we are doing." The "we" is important. DeVaughn (1971b)

initiative and respond to the syndrome, beginning perhaps with the proficient development, implementation, and evaluation of performance objectives.

Nicholson lists three steps toward achieving adroitness in the area of performance objectives: the establishment of a strong frame of reference for the development of performance objectives, the development of the ability to create a viable hierarchy of administrative task areas in which to devote time and energy, and the acquisition of skill in applying the techniques of administrative performance analysis.

Wear and Basom (1970) detail the results of a workshop on accountability held at the University of Wyoming. They discuss accountability at the national, state, and local levels and present methods for school and staff evaluation in implementing an accountability system. In the area of leadership, staff evaluation at the local level is a necessity. Appendixes include a paper explaining performance evaluation, a list of internal and external evaluation guides, and a bibliography of evaluation criteria materials.

Evaluation systems inevitably reflect the values and aspirations of school districts (Culbertson 1971). Two areas of accountability are identified: setting objectives and determining priorities among those objectives, and effective goal attainment. In Culbertson's viewpoint,

> Since evaluation systems for principals cannot be based upon absolute criteria, they must remain open both to new evidence on performance and to adjustments in evaluative judgments.

He concludes that evaluation systems for elementary and secondary school principals should be designed with the explicit objectives of stimulating leadership and encouraging improvement efforts.

SALARY DETERMINATION

Castetter and Heisler (1970) detail guidelines for devising a systematic, equitable administrative compensation plan, conducive both to organizational expectations and to individual satisfaction. Professional preparation, experience, intralevel responsibility, and quality of performance must be considered in salary determination. The appraisal of performance quality requires the determination of goals, the establishment of performance standards, and the measurement of progress toward those goals and toward realization of those standards.

The authors stress that goals and performance factors should be limited in number, unambiguous, stated in operational terms, amenable to measurement, and attainable. They also identify five steps in the administrator evaluation procedure: self-appraisal, appraisal by a superior, discussion of appraisals by the administrator and his evaluator, development of standards for the administrator's future performance, and a postappraisal review.

Melton and others (1970) present an updated job description of the secondary school principalship, a modern approach to evaluation of the principal's performance,

and a statement on determining salaries for principals. The text stresses that the principal must perform a variety of roles:

- educational leader
- administrator
- interpreter between students, staff, community, other schools, boards of education, and colleagues
- conflict mediator
- educator of educators
- ombudsman
- professional

It is emphasized that the performance of a principal must be evaluated on the basis of all the roles he performs and that objective evaluation instruments such as graphs and checklists fail to evaluate the entire responsibility.

Melton and his colleagues suggest that job titles be discarded as guides to salary determination, because such titles are inconsistent and inequitable for describing the principal's responsibilities and duties. The criteria for salary determination espoused by the authors are qualifications required, duties executed, authority and responsibilities assigned, and situational factors or working conditions. Results of a national survey on administrative salaries, arranged alphabetically by school district, are appended.

> **The basis for compensation should . . . be expertise brought to the role, and not the role itself.** Melton and others (1970)

Instruments and Procedures

The Educational Research Service (1968) describes formalized evaluation procedures for administrative and supervisory personnel in sixty-two school systems. Details of the evaluation procedures include personnel evaluated, frequency of evaluation, methodology, notification of results, and appeal procedures. The most commonly mentioned areas of evaluation are administration (organizing and managing ability), supervision (instruction and curriculum), relationships, personal qualities, and professional qualities. The questionnaire used in the study and evaluation forms from eight school systems are included.

In a later report, the Educational Research Service (1970) describes "client-oriented" evaluation programs, in which students evaluate teachers, teachers evaluate principals, and principals evaluate central office personnel. Twenty-nine school systems responded to a survey conducted to investigate such client-oriented procedures: five systems report on the evaluation of teachers by their students; nineteen systems report on the evaluation of principals by teachers; three systems report on the evaluation of central office personnel and services by principals; and four systems report on evaluation programs developed and administered by universities. The evaluation forms used by each are included, with information on frequency of evaluation and use and disposition of forms. The information is illustrative of some approaches schools and school systems have used to implement evaluation by subordinates.

A 1971 circular by the Educational Research Service reports results of a survey of procedures for evaluating the performance of administrators and supervisors. Tables and discussions cover probationary periods

for administrators, personnel evaluated and frequency of evaluation, purposes of the evaluation, evaluation procedures, and help for the unsatisfactory administrator.

The report includes evaluation forms from eleven school systems, with brief explanations preceding each form or group of forms. The instruments are not presented as ideal but are intended to stimulate the thinking of individuals involved in developing or revising procedures for evaluating the performance of school administrative and advisory personnel. The original questionnaire is included, as is a selected bibliography of thirty items.

The Washington Principal Evaluation Inventory provides both a measure of overall principal effectiveness and scores for each of seven dimensions of administrator behavior (Andrews 1970). The inventory consists of sixty-four statements of principal behavior. Teachers and fellow administrators make judgments concerning the extent to which the principal fulfills his responsibilities in these areas. A sample inventory and a scoring key are included in the document.

Turner's article (1971) offers brief background information on the administrator evaluation process used by the Fort Worth, Texas, board of education and adapted by Tulsa, Oklahoma. This procedure stipulates annual evaluation by the school board using a simple instrument designed to be adaptable to any school district's evaluation needs.

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Constant feedback is essential to the personal and professional emotional health of the evaluatee and the evaluator. *DeVaughn (1971b)*

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